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Report Highlights:

* Vietnam raises swine flu alert level *Rice exports reach record 2.3 million tons *Bird flu infects ducks in Quang Ngai *Rainy season has arrived in the South

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Trade Report
Ho Chi Minh City [VM2]
[VM]

Welcome to "News Summary" from Vietnam, an occasional summary of issues of interest to the U. S. agricultural community. The report includes information that has been garnered during travel within Vietnam, reported in the local media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Press articles are included and summarized in this report. Significant issues may be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office. Minor grammatical changes have been made for clarification.

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Vietnam raises swine flu alert level

Vietnam raised its swine flu alert to Level 4 yesterday, warning that the threat of "community level outbreaks" could rise at anytime.

The move came after the World Health Organization upgraded its international warning to the same level and issued the same warning Tuesday.

The country may close certain public places and limit travel to and from infected zones, said Nguyen Huy Nga, head of the Health Ministry's Department for Preventive Health.

Vietnam has the advantage of 15 influenza monitoring stations that were set up two years ago with the support of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(Source: Thanh Nien News, Apr. 29)

Rice exports reach record 2.3 million tons

Rice exports have reached a record high of 2.3 million tons in the first 4 months, fetching \$900 million, the Viet Nam food Association (VFA) reported on Monday.

Truong Thanh Phong, VFA chairman, said under the current situation, exports could exceed the year's target of 5 million tons, also a record level.

The VFA plans to recommend the Government hike the target by 200,000 tons. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development estimates the paddy output at around 38 million tons this year.

(Vietnam News, Apr. 29)

Bird flu infects ducks in Quang Ngai

Bird flu has infected a flock of more than 2,500 two-month old ducks in the central province of Quang Ngai, according to the province's Animal Health Department.

On April 21 and 22 the ducks died en-masse, and sample tests showed they were infected with the H5N1 strain of bird flu. Local authorities culled the flock and implemented measures to prevent further outbreaks.

(Source: Viet Nam News, Apr. 27)

Rainy season has arrived in the South

The southern Bureau of Hydrology and Meteorology said the rainy season began yesterday in southern areas. Heavy rain and thundershowers covered the southern provinces of Binh Phuoc, Dong Nai, and Ho Chi Minh City, as well as several western provinces, it said.

(Source: Thanh Nien News, Apr. 26)

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